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NOVEMBER, 1964

"We cannot be
devoted children
of the Father
if we are not
affectionate brothers
or sisters of all
who share with us
the life of the
divine family."

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Modernizing the Religious Habit

SISTER MACARIA NEUSSENDORFER, O.S.B.

> O Lord God . . . giver of all good gifts, we humbly beseech Thee, that Thou wouldst deign to bless and sanctify these garments with which Thy handmaids wish to clothe themselves . . . so that, distinguished from other women, they may be recognized as belonging to Thee.
>
> May the Lord take from you the old self and clothe you with the new man who is created according to God in justice and holiness of truth.

With these prayers the bishop in the name of the Church invests young women with the habit that is to be their livery as specially dedicated members of God's household. Like the sacraments and most of the sacred rites of holy mother Church, this ritual is based on a symbolism connatural to man. Even a very cursory glance at the phenomenology of human dress reveals that clothing is symbolic of the inner self. Extreme fads or glaring colors, for example, can be relevant in either a positive or negative way; i.e., they may reveal an aggressive, adventurous spirit, or they may be an attempt at compensation by a person who is actually shy and timorous. Our common experience indicates how much we take the symbolic value of clothes for granted. When we first meet a stranger we unconsciously advert to the style of his clothing — it helps us to categorize him temporarily, until closer acquaintance allows of additional criteria for measuring the kind of man he is. "Clothes do not make the man" is a proverb found in almost all languages, but even as we say it we realize that they do create the image of the man. They are, in fact, one very effective means of communicating the inner self to the outer world.

There is a counter movement at work here also. Many a woman can testify to having been lifted out of a mood of depression by the purchase of a new hat or dress. Moving into a wider perspective, we recognize anew the significance of the aborigine's donning the skin of a bear or a wolf or attaching to his belt the rattle of a deadly snake. For the primitive, such action was not

meant to convey an inner reality, but to confer on the wearer a new spirit: the ferocity and cunning and endurance of the animal were now his. The same belief is evident in primitive religions. Many Egyptian papyri, for example, show the priest wearing over his own head the head of a god; he is for the time being transformed into the divinity. So too actors can testify, from the wearer of mask in Greek drama to the modern star on Broadway, that a costume helps to effect a psychological metamorphosis.

What all these symbolic uses of dress have in common is that they are temporary, are confined more or less to the outer surface of the psyche, and depend for their inward effect on the credence of the wearer. When we come to relate human psychology, the content of myth, or the findings of anthropology to the realm of sacred reality, we must guard against a too-facile comparison or the setting up of a one-to-one correspondence. When the true God in the Old Testament and God-made-Man in the New Dispensation established the sacred rituals of worship, he was not merely imitating what had been the customary way of religions in all parts of the world throughout the known history of man. He was subsuming what was deeply expressive of man's nature; he was making use of what had existed entirely on a human level before, and was transforming it, that is basically and radically changing it, into a sacred reality. So ritual bathing, such as that practiced by the Hindu, when adapted as a sacred sign by Christ, has not merely symbolic value but directly effects the thing signified, not in virtue of the faith of the recipient, but by the power of Christ who willed to work in and through this sign. Furthermore, in those rites of the Church by which a new identity is conferred, the effect is permanent and irrevocable, not depending on renewal of the sign for its maintenance. Indeed, a second conferral of Baptism, Confirmation or Ordination would be meaningless, since the status as Christian or as priest is not capable of revocation.

NATURE OF THE ACT OF INVESTITURE AND SYMBOLIC VALUE OF THE HABIT

The investiture of a religious Sister with the habit of her Congregation may at first sight appear to be analogous to a sacrament like Baptism. Does it not signify the conferral of a new

identity? Does it not mean the beginning of a new life in which the religious is expected to grow in perfection in much the same way as the baptized Christian strives to grow to the full stature of the Christ-life? But on closer analysis we are forced to admit that there is a fundamental difference. Whereas in Baptism it is the sacramental sign that confers new life, in the case of entrance into the religious life the investiture with the habit is merely an outward expression of what is interior. This is not just a matter of a different emphasis; it is a distinction which is basic. Perhaps a further comparison with the rite of Baptism will serve to clarify the point. It is the profession of vows that is analogous to the washing and essential form of Baptism, for these effect an inner change. The reader will recall that in the course of the full ritual the priest also puts on the newly baptized a white robe symbolic of the state of his soul. It is this latter ceremony which is most like the clothing with the religious habit. Both are external expressions of what is interior, but neither is a cause of the change. True, investiture antedates profession, but this rather strengthens our case, since the religious as such has no status in the Church before the profession of vows and retains it only for as long as the vows are effective.

We have been at some pains to establish the nature of this act of investiture because of the confusion evident in much of the current discussion of the modification of habits which has so strongly and for so long a time been urged by the Holy Father and by the Sacred Congregation of Religious. When change is advocated in some groups, one is apt to hear what is intended to be a withering remark: "If you don't want to wear the habit, why did you come to religious life?" or: "The habit and veil are traditional symbols of virginity. If I am going to wear a suit, I might as well join the Peace Corps." Such comments are not only surprising; they are disturbing in their import, for they disclose misconceptions that are radical. What these remarks reveal is something very like a superstitious use of the sacred vesture. Whereas we have demonstrated that the wearing of the habit falls into the category of the symbolism of clothing (namely, as an expression of a reality already present), this attitude would see in the habit itself and even in a particular form of the habit the power to *confer*

a new life. There is not much to distinguish this concept from the fetishism of the primitive warrior who went into battle with great confidence because he wore the feathers of an eagle and the hide of a mountain-cat. In both cases there is great fear occasioned by loss of the external habiliment, for with loss of the costume goes loss of identity. What the error basically amounts to is a subtle transfer (in our thinking) of the sense of the sacral from person to garment. A piece of silk or linen when taken off the bolt is like any other until it is fashioned into a chasuble or altar cloth; only then does it take on a sacred character, and this from its association with the consecrated object or sacred person. We recall that our Lord in exasperation inquired of the Pharisees: "Foolish and blind ones, which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold?" (Matt. 23:17). Thus, it is clear that a religious habit would have no meaning if a person were to wear it fraudulently.

But we must guard against a one-sided oversimplification. If the habit had meaning only by association, we would remain indifferent to a fraudulent use of it; that there is in fact a sense of outrage indicates how deep a symbolic value it has acquired *per se*. Sacred vesture does have significance in itself precisely because it appeals to an element in the human psyche that is deeply rooted beyond conscious control and even beyond complete rational analysis. (Symbolism reaches to the intuitive, with its immediate contact with reality.) The priest, for example, in primitive religions and in all sacramental religions has a garment reserved for his use. And although the priesthood is his permanently, he is to our way of thinking never so much a priest as when robed in the vestments. The ritual garments, the conventionalized words and actions, lift him out of the temporal into the realm of sacred time where he becomes the ambassador of the finite to the infinite. With due limitations, this is the function also of the religious Sister. Furthermore, Sisters are in this finite world as witnesses to spiritual values which serve to remind men of the very existence of the infinite. Where their function is not merely being (as in the contemplative way) but also doing (as in the active apostolate), a major consideration must be whether, in fact, the kind of garment chosen is symbolic in the best way of those qualities which religion intends to convey to contemporary man, and whether it is suited to the

concept of a virginal life not lived entirely in a sacred space but largely in the open realm of a temporal, secular world. These are questions which must be reserved for a later part of our discussion; first we wish to consider the significance of the habit to the religious herself. It is clearly no iconoclastic impulse to reduce reverence for sacred vesture as such that motivates us. It is a concern lest we allow ourselves to be betrayed into thinking in too literal a fashion; lest we attribute to a particular traditional form of the habit a significance which is rightly due only to the dedicated person who wears it; lest, in fine, we make of it a fetish.

Should anyone think this fear groundless, let him recall the many remarks he has heard which carry just such implications. "I'd hate to teach in a public school. At least the habit gives us some authority and makes the children respect us." It is not the *person* of the teacher that wins respect, then, but the outward appearance. It is as if by putting on a habit one had stepped into a new "super-personality" for the sake of commanding deference from others. But if the personality can be stepped into, it can also be stepped out of — and this seems to be the fear that causes so much resistance to change. The same phenomenon can be observed in many young religious who recede from individuality and responsible maturity on donning the habit. There seems to be an abstract, ideal "type" of religious, whose ingredients include large doses of docility and pietism, to which they feel obliged to conform. Novice mistresses will be quick to confirm that it is much easier to aid in the formation of a young woman who in a sensible, straightforward manner continues to "be herself" than to try to fathom the character of one who hides behind a facade which a mistaken concept of the habit has led her to form. Such an applicant may, indeed, have been attracted to religious life by what she conceived of as a kind of glamour in the plain garb. Far more sure the motivation of one who comes in spite of the habit, or simply to be a religious without adverting to appearance.

REASONS FOR AND AGAINST ADAPTATION OF THE HABIT

An objection commonly heard to a modification of the habit runs something like this: "If we change our habit, people will begin to think of us on a more human level. They'll be quick to notice faults and will not have confidence in us. The habit makes

them feel that they can trust us." Such an argument comes dangerously close to admitting that the appearance not only is more important than the essence, but that it can to some extent supply for the essence. If my inner self, my trustworthiness as a person, my Christ-like love and apostolic zeal are not intense enough to be evident without a habit of particular length and style, then perhaps no one, secular or religious, ought to be entrusting me with their secret sorrows. During the time of transition there would undoubtedly be a temporary loss of the sense of the sacred, but who would presume to say that this challenge would not ultimately be for the good? Will it not have to be the exemplary conduct of our lives — our modest demeanor, our charity and joy in the Lord — which creates in the minds of men a sacral character for the new vesture?

Another class of objections are those which relate to the religious woman as person. Among these is the concept of the habit as a barrier against the world, as a safeguard or kind of "walking cloister." That it is indeed a barrier will be considered later, but from the viewpoint of the religious herself might it not be altogether too protective? It has been said, "In modern dress the Sisters would encounter many difficulties in their work with souls." But braving difficulty makes for maturity, as we would be quick to tell an over-protective mother. Having to make our own way on streetcars, at public meeting places, or on large university campuses without the special deference paid to our religious garb might be a very salutary thing for us. It would, in most cases, be a humbling experience to look like and be treated like other women. Furthermore, an edifying life would then become a matter of personal choice rather than a foregone conclusion. If rightly responded to, this would lead to a deepening of personal dedication to Christ; when one can no longer depend on material means to carry one, the spirit must be strengthened.

We do not view the situation with any kind of idealistic naiveté — it will not come as any surprise if numbers of wavering souls revoke their dedication when they take off the traditional habit. Those who are not and have never been committed to their vocation by a deep personal act of decision may not be able to weather the adjustment. But this is true of every period of transi-

tion; a revaluation is required, and for those who make it without faltering a deeper loyalty will result. When the long-range effect is for the good of the Church and is urged by the Holy Father himself, we must be willing to risk much in the way of immediate confusion and hardship, putting our trust in the God who saw fit to create us free even when inestimable numbers would abuse that gift of freedom and be lost forever.

If being carried by the momentum of a group can be detrimental to the maturity of an individual, so can the loss of identity within a group. Some persons hesitate to consider an adoption of modern dress because "It is difficult to maintain uniformity, since modern styles are more suited to individuals than to large numbers." This fact could with equal validity be considered a great advantage. As was indicated early in this article, one aspect of the psychological effect of clothing is that directed inward to the wearer. As is the case with the actor, we tend to be influenced by our external appearance. (Recall, for example, that this is the rationale for requiring dress clothes in many of our schools.) There are several qualities of the traditional habit which cannot be considered as contributing anything positive to interior formation. The very fact that a voluminous "casing" of material covers the person completely, from floor to top of head, tends to smother the sense of individuality. With this may come a lack of self-identity, over-dependence on the group, lack of initiative, and frequent failure to realize or accept personal responsibility. The bulky, almost masculine cut and quality of many habits cannot fail to have some interior effect. Before we can sanctify what we are, we must accept what we are. To try to forget our nature as women is just another variation of the heresy of angelism and cannot but have deep-seated repercussions in our personal lives and our dealings with others. Certainly there should be nothing in any way unbecoming, but there can be no objection to a dress that is womanly in a modest, straightforward way.

The headdress by its prominence is even more important in its significance both to the wearer and to the viewer. Facsimile coffins, ingenious replicas of Gothic cathedrals or any of the other varieties of boxed and bundled and bow-tied headpieces betray anything but a healthy sense of person. When only a small, pinched

area of face is visible, it is small wonder that Sisters in their dealings with the public have difficulty in establishing their identity. It is very common for two or three Sisters in a community to be mistaken for each other, not only by outsiders, but even by their own. It goes without saying that there is resultant damage to inner security.

Finally, among the points of discussion which could be classified as "the view from within" are those based on vanity, convenience, or adherence to tradition. In any Congregation when the subject of adaptation is introduced, a considerable body of opinion is at once voiced that "*We* are all right; it's all the others who ought to change. *Our* habit is universally admired for its simplicity." In addition to such communal vanity, there is evidence of the personal type: "The habit looks good on all ages and sizes, it covers physical blemishes"; "most of the suggested headpieces would show the hair and I prefer my gray to be covered"; "the old style wimple gives a youthful appearance by supporting sagging chins." This from women who every morning for years have been praying, "Take away from me all levity of mind and vanity of dress."

Economy and convenience in the care of clothing are criteria to be taken more seriously than the aforementioned, because they have direct implications for the apostolate in terms of time and money. It is true that much planning and experimenting will be necessary before the most practical styles and materials will be found. There is no call for minimizing the difficulties but neither is there reason for resting in inactivity. It is debatable whether many of the existing habits can be defended on these grounds; the majority definitely are not highly economical or convenient.

Adherence to tradition is the most understandable motive for resisting change. Long years of treasuring a particular custom can result in a deeply ingrained attachment. In addition to this, communities have passed on from generation to generation a reverence for their unique mode of dress in an effort to sustain a high level of *espirit de corps*. One realizes with compassion what a wrenching experience it could be to relinquish a uniform to which deep symbolic value has been attached. But the sacrifice must be made for

the sake of a higher good: the creation of a new image of religion and religious in a pluralistic world.

THE RELIGIOUS HABIT IN A PLURALISTIC CULTURE

It is this, really, which is at the crux of the whole question. Up to this point we have been discussing almost entirely the "view from within," largely because most objections to change fall within this area. The truly significant question, however, is that which rises from the symbolism of clothes: How effectively do the traditional habits communicate the inner reality of the religious life to the modern world? In order to answer this question honestly, we must make a sincere effort to detach ourselves from the conditioned attitude we have developed by long familiarity. Two examples from our own conduct should be of help. First, any religious will recall her first response to habits of communities hitherto unknown to her. If the truth were to be told, we would have to admit that gatherings where many varieties of habits appear invariably are the scenes of comments on the "outlandish" appearance of some "other" groups. Does it not behoove us to realize that we too make the same impression on others, that their comments about us are likewise something less than deferential? To quibble about variations in headgear or color and cut of habit is to miss the point. Even if any one group has a shade more of simplicity in this or that feature, the total effect is still one that draws from the world at large not love, veneration, and admiration, but a degree of annoyance or amusement or at best mere tolerance (with the exception, perhaps, of those who see something romantic in the long gown and exotic headpeice, or those who have ties of familial affection with someone so garbed).

A second bit of evidence taken from our own conduct would be to recall as honestly as possible our personal reaction to another religious group such as the Mennonites. At the very least the bearded men with broad-brimmed black hats and the ladies with bonnets and somber, flowing skirts excite curiosity. We regard them as oddities. Much the more typical American reaction — and it is probably a healthy one — is annoyance. We regard as suspect any religious group which finds it necessary or desirable to flaunt their beliefs by such esoteric means. We may admire their courage for holding to their convictions, but secretly there lurks the question:

If they had a deep and authentic faith, would it be necessary to be so ostentatious?

Most Congregations of religious can date the origin of their habit to some modification of a costume that was common to many women in the Europe of an earlier age. Historically, then, we have no justification for setting ourselves so radically apart — our founders made no such arrangement. (In the very earliest ages of the Church, virgins did not even wear veils — their vow of virginity and their charity to the poor set them apart.) But even if centuries of tradition can now be cited in favor of a distinctive dress, the argument does not hold, for what might be appropriate for a Christian society is not necessarily so for a pluralistic one. As Karl Rahner points out, even the Europe which cradled most of our Orders has again returned to a missionary status. A Church in *diaspora* cannot risk holding religion up to ridicule by a thoughtless parading of things that strike the general public as "queer." To hark back again to apostolic times, it would not be out of place to recall how carefully the Christians in that non-Christian environment protected by secrecy the sacred truths and rites of the Church, so that even Catechumens were not admitted to the fulness of the mystery. We should not be misled if we were to imitate their delicacy of perception regarding the inadvisability of casting pearls where there is no readiness to receive them.

The clergy in America recognized this long ago by adopting the custom of wearing suits in public. The habit or cassock is honored for its symbolism in the closed circle of rectory or monastery, but in public the "skirts" are apt to draw embarrassed smiles or outright derision. So, where it is appropriate, a distinctive black suit and the Roman collar are worn; where further adaptation is desirable, ordinary clothes replace even this. Is the priest any less a priest for lack of his outward regalia? No one would raise the question. His sacred state is an inward one, and his function as witness to the infinite will not be effective where it is not governed by prudence. Why should the case be otherwise with religious women? Perhaps the reason for the lapse in time before recommendations to modernize were even made is that both we and the Church at large are caught in a "cultural lag." We are only beginning to come to terms with the fact that woman's role

in the world has changed and that not all religious women are to be conceived of as enclosed in sacred space behind cloister walls. If we are to be abroad apostolically and professionally, as any active community must be, then let us appear in the kind of dress that will allow us to be accepted by our brothers and sisters "in the world."

If, as was our initial premise, clothing does convey an image to the viewer on the outside, what concept does modern man form from traditional habits? We have already adverted to the inescapable impression of fanaticism. To anyone not commonly familiar with the garb (and this includes the majority), the element of uniformity is also very striking. Somber colors, rigid uniformity, fantastic deviation from the ordinary, together with a smothering completeness — does this constitute the kind of impression we fondly hope we are making? True, there is something to be said for traditional habits on the grounds of modesty, dignity, and intrinsic beauty. The long flowing lines do have something basically more appealing to our aesthetic sense than do the prevailing modes of the twentieth century. But when there is question of reaching the contemporary mind, how much relative weight can one give to the aesthetic? Is it wise to hold with intransigence to a more or less absolute standard of beauty when this is so far removed from the idiom of the time? Undoubtedly the aura of quaint out-modedness is among the elements most obstructive to a true representation of religion. We may say with pride, "Our habit dates back to the time of Chaucer!" But secretly our students and our secular friends are discounting a goodly share of the advice we are giving them because they cannot believe we really have insight into the contemporary situation. Our anachronistic appearance contributes powerfully to the impression that we simply are not pertinent to the world here and now.

Some readers may be indulgently smiling with disbelief: "Surely our good Catholic people do not feel this way. They accept the habit. It forms no barrier." Let it be remembered that adults are not inclined to be spontaneous and open about their reactions toward something which they have been trained to regard as sacred. If we want a frank and ingenuous evaluation of the habit as it impresses a twentieth-century world, let us recall the responses of

children. Any time religious women are gathered, this topic can furnish a half-hour's exchange of anecdotes which call forth shrieks of laughter. But *is* it so humorous that we are conundrums to them? Their reactions usually fall into one of two categories: (1) the unnatural appearance strikes terror into their hearts and they ask their mothers not *who*, but "What is it?" or (2) they think we are playing some preposterous adult game: "Are you going to a Halloween party?" Such unstudied and guileless reactions ought to give us pause and help us to answer the question: How effective are the traditional habits in conveying the meaning of the religious life?

THE HABIT AS A MATERIAL EXPRESSION OF *AGGIORNAMENTO*

The reader will by now be well aware that a modification of the religious habit cannot be considered in isolation from the whole ferment of renewal in the Church. It is, indeed, peripheral to more basic questions such as the true concept of the Church and how as a scattered minority it is to bear witness in a hostile or indifferent world; or how the new emphasis on personal freedom and responsibility is to find an equilibrium point. For that small segment of the Church constituted by women religious, however, adaptation of their garb can provide both a testing ground for present attitudes — how deeply *are* we imbued with the mind of the Church? — and an occasion for opening our minds to the new impulses of theology and apostolic concern. Such concern will lead us to see that to expect men and women of the world to accommodate themselves to us, to demand in effect that they put aside all prejudices and allow us to continue in their midst not only unmolested but even honored, is unrealistic and even arrogant. We do not mean to say that we ought to make the world a measuring rod in a strict sense; it is a fine line that separates adaptation from compromise. But if we, by our appearance, bring additional opprobrium on ourselves, will we not be held accountable for the sins of our brothers? A dedicated virginity has never been found meaningful outside a Christian *milieu*, and the world we live in is not Christian. To announce our dedication by outmoded garb can only serve to alienate the people of our time, not only from ourselves but from the ideals we represent. If we wish to communicate with them, we must approach them on a basis of likeness, not difference; we

must be in their midst as one of them in order to win them for Christ. A dress which is modest, dignified, feminine, practical and unobtrusive by its modernity is far more likely to project the image we hope to create in the minds of men than the habits we now wear.

When the bishop prays at the investiture ceremony that the garments may be a symbol of the new man and may mark the recipients as belonging to Christ, he gives beautiful expression to the two-fold function they are to serve. They are to be a sign to us and of us — as we wish to be and as we wish to be seen. But if the ceremony is to be a fountainhead of truth at the opening of religious life, care must be taken that the prayer for the expulsion of the old man be understood in its Catholic sense. We do not believe that the natural man is desperately corrupt and that only substitution of a redeemed self can give hope of salvation. Rather it is the self-same being whom God created once and for always that he deigns to cleanse and sanctify for the glory of his name.

If we truly believe this, we will recognize the fundamental goodness of God's handiwork also in the contemporary world; we will desire for it, too, the grace of redemption. And that we may carry on without hindrance our share in this great work, we will be willing now to sacrifice a traditional habit as once we sacrificed our very lives.

LEARNING HOW TO LOVE. IV

How the Natural Loves Become Charity

A. DURAND

"And the second is like unto this," He went on. But why a second? Why not stop with that supreme love which is simple homage to him who is above all? Why distract our minds almost at once with a duty towards our neighbor?

The answer is not difficult, of course. Whether we think of our love of God as in some way comparable to the affection between child and parent, or as a kind of friendship with his Son, as resembling a betrothal to the Son, or even as a selfless devotion to his glory, we are forced to recognize that this love of ours can never be genuine until with him it receives all who are dear to him. For we cannot be devoted children of the Father if we are not affectionate brothers or sisters of all who share with us the life of the divine family; nor do we deserve to be called friends, comrades in his work, if we are not ready to offer our lives in the service of those for whom he offered his life. If our acceptance of him as Bridegroom has any meaning, with him we must accept all of his children; and, finally, if we truly seek the glory of his name, we must wish that every soul may praise him, and this is the same as wishing that all may share in the charity which has been poured forth upon us. To love God without wanting others to love God is impossible. To love God without attempting to draw others to this same love is impossible. There is no such thing as one love for God and a different one for man. Not for Christians. When we turn to our neighbor in charity, we are not turning away from God. There can be only one charity. "Love springs from God; no one can love without being born of God and knowing God" (1 John 4:7). It is with the same love, the love for God which God has given us, that we love all that is his.

Nature will never carry us far enough now. We must love even enemies, and do good to those who hate us, because they belong to God. We must find room in our hearts for the wretched,

the repulsive, the undeserving, because we are his and they are his, one life together; because this is the way he loves, "making his sun to shine on the just and the unjust."[1]

And what about the natural loves? Do they survive in the Christian life? They must; but never as merely natural. Every natural love we have must be transformed, because it is God who must be loved now in father, mother, brother, sister, wife, husband, children and friends. In all these it is God who must be loved, and they who must be loved in God.

Our natural loves must be transformed by charity. Let us make sure that we grasp this truth.

Anything in life that is good by nature — health, intelligence, energy, or any native talent — can be used or misused. It can become an occasion for sin or an occasion for virtue. By using a natural power as an image of something far higher, our Lord may show that he approves it; but the fact that Christ employs the natural to teach the supernatural must never lead us to judge that a natural power is sufficient by itself. The power to eat, for example, is a good thing, since it is necessary for natural life. Now, as used by our Lord in the Eucharist, this humble natural function becomes a sign of a spiritual feeding of the soul by the divine life, a sign of charity. But the fact that our Lord puts eating to such beautiful use—in order to convince us that God really does mean to be our life, to support us spiritually as food does physically — makes eating itself neither spiritual nor beautiful. Eating remains what it was: a natural function of animals, which can lead to evil as well as to good. The same is true of our natural powers of affection. But the affections, unlike eating, are not so plainly part of our animal nature, and can inspire such beautiful unselfishness, of an entirely natural kind, that we may be fooled by it, taking a natural charity for the real thing. This is a warning that needs to be repeated. Though a power of devotion to our fellow creatures may sometimes look very much like charity, it does not by nature approach the divine virtue. It will never be hard to find many people with a beautiful inborn gift of kindness, affection, or

[1] "Jesus Christ alone is singularly to be beloved; who alone is found good and faithful above all friends. For Him, and in Him, let as well friends as foes be dear unto thee; and all these are to be prayed for, that He would make them all to know and love Him" *(Imitation)*.

service, who are without a scrap of true charity.[2] Such natural powers of loving our neighbor, no matter how appealing in themselves, must be brought into submission to Christ, and become a means of loving God. "Christ died for us all, so that being alive should no longer mean living with our own life, but with his life who has died for us and risen again; and therefore henceforward we *do not think of anyone in merely human fashion*" (2 Cor. 5:15-16). We must Christianize our loves: we have to think of everyone now as our Lord would have us think of them; to love them in Christ and to love Christ in them. Never again may we think of anyone in a merely human fashion.

Even the humblest of the affections, the need-loves with which all human life begins, and without which it could hardly survive, can be changed into divine love. How may we determine whether this transformation has begun, whether our simplest and most ordinary attachment to others has become a way of loving God, or remains a mere pagan sentiment? Here are a few questions which may help us decide.

Are we the sort of person who resents being helped? Who will endure embarrassing ignorance, even allow mistakes in our work, rather than humbly appeal to others for assistance? Do we obstinately refuse to admit that we are sick? Resent and reject sympathy? Do we perhaps even dislike asking to have something passed to us at table? We have all observed little children, who angrily push aside a grown-up's hand and cry, "Let me do it myself!" when it is perfectly obvious that they can't do it themselves. If these proud little spirits understood God and how he works, they would recognize in those who have charge of them the servants of their Father, and would welcome their love as coming from God. They would return their love, humbly, thankfully, without shame, as an admission of their need of God, as an act of charity. Such an awareness of how God is loving them is not expected of children; but it is expected of us. So, henceforward, we may not think even of our benefactors in a merely human fashion; we must not reject their help, nor spurn their sympathy; we must not push aside a hand which is really that of our eternal Father,

[2] "For all that is high, is not holy; nor all that is sweet, good; nor every desire, pure; nor is everything that is dear unto us, pleasing to God" (*Imitation*).

and foolishly lay claim to an independence which is utterly unreal. Those who come to our rescue, in small trials or great, give us a chance to practise through them the grateful love of God.

But perhaps we stand at the other extreme? Instead of rejecting affection, perhaps we are the type who is forever craving it! Are we quick to suspect others of neglecting or slighting us? Complaining, when sick, that nobody ever comes to see us? That nobody realizes all the work we have to do? Or that our spells of depression or anxiety never meet with the slightest sympathy or understanding? Are we even capable of refusing to face our work until we have got the appreciation that we are entitled to? And do we drop hints, with the same purpose as a child's fake whimpers, in order to get attention or praise? If any of this description fits, what is the matter with us? The matter with us is that Christ and his love are not enough; we are demanding something besides. If some creature would only consent to soothe and comfort us a little, to flatter us a little, we would accept these attentions as a quite pleasant substitute for the love of God himself. In plain English, divine charity is not important in our lives; if enough natural and human love were available, we would manage nicely without the love of Christ.

What is true of affection as need-love is just as true, of course, of affection as a gift-love.

No Christian may ever do a kindness for the sole motive of giving affection. "Henceforward we may not think of anyone in merely human fashion." As for us, who by our very state in life are bound to charity, we must make sure that it is the love of Christ that is urging us, not the mere natural desire, however admirable, to love others.

We can detect when our affection has lost all divine quality by this further little test: How do we want to be rewarded for our services? To whom do we look for this reward? We may labor without stint, teaching, nursing, instructing, advising, consoling, ready for any task however menial, if directly or indirectly through it we may bring aid to someone in need. But we may begin to look for thanks. And perhaps for more than thanks: for signs of esteem, of regard, of affection returned. Now it is wrong, and very wrong, for even the natural parents of a family to demand

that children pay back what has been spent on them. This demand is wrong because to love and serve their children is the duty of parents under God, a duty imposed by divine charity. Surely this sense of duty must be still more true of spiritual fathers and spiritual mothers. We must never require any return from those we serve, not even thanks. And it may be a positive compliment, indeed the only true one, not to be thanked. If we have done our best for people, sparing no time, patience, kindness or care, and they are moved, not to thank us but to thank our Lord, then we have served them as we should. If, on the contrary, they feel a great obligation to repay our kindness, and are never done with thanking us, and perhaps shower us with compliments and presents, we have reason to suspect that they are thinking of us in merely human fashion, with nobody to blame for it but ourselves. Congratulations, signs of esteem, testimonials, assurances that we are indispensable, should all upset us a little. What have we done? What has been the effect of all our efforts? Have we brought others to love Christ? Or have we brought them to love us?

We ought often to experience the weary feeling that it might be easier to banish a natural affection entirely than to do what must be done to make it into charity. How easy it is to be good to those we love, and how hard sincerely to want goodness for them! How easy to be indulgent, how hard to be patient! It is the true Christian mother, I suppose, who offers the most vivid example of natural affection made supernatural. What we must notice of a true Christian mother is, not how she differs from a merely bad mother, but from a good one who seeks only the natural well-being of her child. To be a mother after the mind of God is not just a question of kindly discipline, of getting young people to bed at night and up in the morning, of inducing them to be clean, neat, honest and respectable. No, she has something far harder to accomplish. She has to form her child's mind so that God will become the most real thing in his life. In that child's mind, "What will my eternal Father think?" must become a question more instinctive than, "What will my parents think?" She has to lead her child to think of God as his primary Parent; the Person to whom he owes everything, the Person whom he must fear to offend. It is her child's eternal vocation which she must hold in mind, and

which she must induce him to hold in mind. This is her own child, flesh of her flesh, a part of her very self; and yet, not even of him dare she think in merely human fashion. The Christian mother, therefore, is not going to be much upset by bad manners, runny noses, or even by bad tempers. Her aim is supernatural, and she puts her faith in supernatural means. She seeks nothing for herself. She wants to be loved by her child only in the measure that the love of his mother will be good for him. She knows that you save a family on your knees.

Passing now to friendship, we may notice that, as being of all natural attachments already the most spiritual, it ought to be the one most easily taken over by charity. And this will be indeed true when the friendship is for virtue's sake. A holy friendship is a priceless benefit. In a life which aims at God's will, the example, advice, and encouragement of someone whom we esteem, and whose great aim in life is also God's will, cannot fail to bring immense support.

> A faithful friend is a strong defence, and he that hath found him hath found a treasure. Nothing can be compared to a faithful friend, and no weight of gold or silver is able to countervail the goodness of his fidelity. A faithful friend is the medicine of life and immortality, and they that fear the Lord shall find him (Ecclus. 6:14-16).

"They that fear the Lord shall find him." There is an implicit warning in these words, soon to be repeated by the sacred writer: "He that feareth God shall likewise have good friendship, because according to himself shall his friend be" (v. 17). They who fear God will take as friends people like themselves. No others will win their intimacy. From a Christian life, therefore, friendship for pleasure or profit will tend to disappear. The Christian ought to despise himself when he notices that his motive for seeking anybody's company, or for doing a service, is nothing better than hope of personal advantage.

But let us be content, for the moment, with these brief remarks on friendship which, please notice, hold for all Christians. The special problem of friendships in the religious life is better reserved until it can be dealt with by itself.

Finally, there is the transforming of sexual love into a holy thing; and this is done, as we all know, by the direct intervention of our Lord himself. Sexual love can actually be a sacrament: the mutual possessing of each other by husband and wife becoming the outward and visible sign of a bond of grace, a bond of charity.

None of the other natural loves has been raised to such dignity. There is no sacrament of affection, no sacrament of friendship. Why has sexual love been so favored? A possible reason is that this love is at once the most vital to humankind and potentially the most dangerous. Nor should we fail to notice that man and woman, in their love, will need support from more than their own two natures, because their mutual surrender is so complete. By their marriage vows, the personal happiness of each is placed in the hands of the other. Although they are two fallen beings, weak, selfish and fickle, surrounded by a world which has no use for their Christian ideals, they are vowing fidelity to each other, promising to cherish and serve each other, in hardship or security, in joy or pain, until old age and death. Without a miracle, there would be small hope of perseverance in such a vocation. The miracle is the grace of Christ.

These are possible replies to our question. But it is doubtful if they make the best answer. In order to get at the deeper truth of the matter, let us first see if we can understand better what Christian marriage really is.

As the beginning of a new life for those who receive it, this sacrament invites comparison with Baptism and with Holy Orders, which are also gateways to a new life. But there is a great difference. In Baptism and in Holy Orders the person is given or consecrated to Christ and his Church; in Marriage there is the gift or consecration of each person to the other. Now, like any sacrament, Marriage is a means to charity. So God must be acting through each party: as they give themselves to each other, through each grace must be imparted to the other. In the conferring of the sacrament, husband and wife take the place of the priest; and the grace bestowed by Christ through husband to wife, and through wife to husband, is the grace of the sacrament. If this grace is nothing other than an increase of charity, what can it be in this

case but a kind of mutual bond, a power of fidelity to God *in and through* fidelity to each other? It is through his wife that the husband receives the grace to love her as God intends. It is through her husband that the wife receives the grace to love her husband as God intends. As a natural thing it is marriage which makes one person by nature nearer to you than any other — two in one flesh. And since charity requires that we love first and best those who are nearest to us by nature, what Christian Marriage imposes as an obligation is the love of this person, a love in God, greater than for anyone else in the world — and this can only mean a desire that the partner in marriage may love God, a desire of grace for them more than for anyone else.

So, if we compare the marriage of two Christians with that of a pair of human beings who are joined only by a natural bond, we see that the great change is again best described in the phrase of Saint Paul: they may no longer think of each other in merely human fashion. Their love must rise above merely natural aims. Even without grace, it should never have been entirely selfish, since by nature the union of man and woman is intended for the good of family and race. But by the sacrament, this union now rises to a purpose which stretches into eternity. Though supported by natural love, the great mission of the married pair is now no longer entirely natural; it has taken on something of a priestly quality, since each must now love the souls entrusted to them by the sacrament with a divine love, a love of utter self-sacrifice. The husband receives a wife who is charged to love him, and to love him for a supernatural end. The wife receives a husband who is now responsible for her to God. Each is made the other's way to eternal life.

But it is now time for an observation which may seem a bit startling, and which will carry us a long way from the glamorous unions of Hollywood. It is only when marriage becomes hard that it has much chance of becoming holy. No one can be so perfectly a way to eternal life as a person who becomes in some way or other your cross. (The saints are forever telling us this about superiors, of course; just as we are forever refusing to take them seriously.) What the world calls a happy marriage is not

so likely to be a high and holy one, nor even a genuinely happy one, as a union which from the outside looks anything but happy.[3]

Why was marriage made a sacrament? You remember how we offered partial answers, knowing that these were superficial. What is the real reason? A great theologian has suggested that it was simply in order that man might be given an image of the union of Christ and his Church, and of the union of Christ with any soul.

We have explained how sexual love, even as merely natural, could serve as an image of divine love. And this is true enough. But this love, transformed by grace in the sacrament of marriage, bears a still deeper resemblance of charity; and when, through marriage, it finds the cross, the image achieves its ultimate significance. It is the husband bound in love to a wife, selfish, faithless, extravagant, to a wife who cannot be trusted out of his sight, to a wife who breaks his heart — yet whom he cherishes, in patience, in firmness, faithful to her, and doing all he can by prayer and example to lead her to Christ; it is the father with shiftless son or impudent and foolhardy daughter, devoted to this child to the end — it is such a husband and father who becomes the type of Christ giving himself for his Church. And it is the wife, by the divine will bound for life to a worthless wretch of a man, a disloyal husband and useless father, to whom she remains steadfastly faithful, respectful, devoted — it is such a wife who becomes the image of the soul, bound to Christ in one life, who will not let Him go through darkness, doubt and suffering; who will not let

[3] "Marriage then implies a complete donation of one partner to the other, and a love that symbolizes the love of Christ and His Church. The very obstacles put by human nature to the fulfilment of this ideal can make marriage the foundation of an intense spiritual life. For it will soon become apparent that neither party is an angel; both are human. And the love and sacrifice demanded on both sides are so great and so costly that the questions soon arise: "Is any human being worth all this?" "Can any human being give all this?" The answer lies in the fact that it is not a mere human being that gives, nor is it a mere human being that receives. Each one loves, and sacrifices self, in partnership with Christ; each one loves and is served in union with Christ. Beyond her husband, and in his heart, the wife sees and loves and serves Christ. Beyond his wife, and in her heart, the husband sees and loves and serves Christ. The strength to go on, to give all the substance of one's house for love and count it nothing, comes from Christ and is used for Christ. Christ is the lover and Christ is the beloved. For, even in marriage, 'there shall be one Christ loving Himself' " (Eugene Boylan, O.C.S.O. *This Tremendous Lover*, p. 283).

Him go, who is resolved to believe in His love, though He seems unaware of His creature, and who knows that this love will lead to God.

Men and women who are fulfilling in their marriage an image of Christ sacrificing himself for his Church, and an image of the soul faithful to Christ in his sacrifice, or who at least are struggling bravely to realize this high, hard aim, are not so uncommon as might be thought. The humble patience of such persons shows how well they understand how each stands for the other in the place of God; and how it is the love of God, and the desire for his will, which ought to inspire them.

In proportion as a Christian man and wife try to live by the grace of the sacrament which has made them one, in that proportion they make their union a better and better image of the union between Christ and his Bride, the Church, and of the union between the soul and its savior. Hence, in proportion as a Christian man and wife realize their vocation, their life becomes a moving and illuminating likeness of our own higher and holier vocation. It is a grave lesson to us. We are not called to unsex ourselves; our call is also to wifehood and motherhood. We must share the fortunes of the Son of Man to whom we have given ourselves, share his passion, and "earn a living for unfortunate sinners, who are our children."

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Castles in Spain

SISTER MARY OF ST. JOSEPH, O.C.D.

The habit of "building castles in Spain" was a popular diversion long before this particular expression was used to designate such flights of the imagination. Since the time of Saint Teresa, the great Spanish reformer, however, this well-known phrase has come to designate something quite explicit and realistic in spite of the fact that the word "mysticism" is frequently used in connection with it. That word "mysticism" is without doubt the reason why many souls, even among priests and religious, have never so much as opened the book entitled, *The Interior Castle*, and yet they would probably declare without a moment's reflection or hesitation, "Oh, that's too high for me. I'm no mystic." And yet, it is such a pity.

Even to meet Saint Teresa through her writings is an enlightening and broadening, not to say stimulating experience, and there is hardly a book of its size that is more worth the time spent in reading it. Seminarians and young religious or even college students may try at one time or another to dip into its pages, but one or two dips usually ends the experiment. If they only had sufficient curiosity or courage to attempt the same thing a few years later, they would probably be amazed to find so many pages quite understandable — even by such as themselves! Here are two examples:

"Do not let us suppose that if we weep a great deal we have done everything that matters; let us also set to and work hard and practise the virtues, for these are what we most need."

"Some souls... get as far as the Prayer of Quiet... and then think it would be a very great thing to be enjoying these gifts all the time. Let them take my advice, and become less absorbed in them, as I have said elsewhere. For life is long and there are many trials in it and we have need to look at Christ our Pattern and also at His Apostles and Saints, and to reflect how they bore these trials, so that we, too, may bear them perfectly. The good Jesus is too good company for us to forsake Him and His most sacred Mother."

These quotations are not taken from the First Mansion but from the Sixth. Far from being entirely concerned with raptures, transports and mystical piercings of the heart, the Sixth Mansion contains some of Saint Teresa's most practical and generally useful advice. Spiritual writers and retreat masters frequently refer to the teaching of Saint Teresa on the importance of never deliberately rejecting meditation on Christ's sacred humanity. Anyone wishing to read the Saint's own words on this point will find them in the Sixth Mansion, Chapter VII. Some superiors and confessors shy away from Saint Teresa's writings as if the mere contact with her would encourage beginners in the spiritual life to think of and to desire nothing but supernatural favors such as Teresa herself experienced, and yet in the same Sixth Mansion we find this plain common sense advice:

"Since we know the way we have to take to please God—namely that of keeping His Commandments and counsels—let us be very diligent in doing this, and in meditating upon His life and death and upon all that we owe Him, and let the rest come when the Lord wills."

"Some souls also imagine that they cannot dwell upon the Passion, in which case they will be able still less to meditate upon the most sacred Virgin and the lives of the saints, the remembrance of whom brings us such great profit and encouragement. I cannot conceive what they are thinking of, for though angelic spirits freed from everything corporeal may remain permanently enkindled in love, this is not possible for those of us who live in this mortal body. We need to cultivate and think upon and seek the companionship of those who though living on earth like ourselves have accomplished such great deeds for God."

But if we want to begin at the beginning and discover what Saint Teresa really means by the expression "Interior Castle," we again find sublime Catholic doctrine expressed in clear and simple language.

"I began to think of the soul as if it were a castle made of a single diamond or of very clear crystal, in which there are many rooms, just as in Heaven there are many mansions.... Fix your attention on the centre, the room or palace occupied by the King." "Now let us return to our beautiful and delightful castle and see

how we can enter it. I seem rather to be talking nonsense, for if this castle is the soul, there can clearly be no question of our entering it.... But you must understand that there are many ways of 'being' in a place. Many souls remain in the outer court of the castle... and have no idea what there is in that wonderful place or Who dwells in it....

"As far as I can understand, the door of entry into this castle is prayer and meditation. I do not say mental prayer rather than vocal, for if it is prayer at all, it must be accompanied by meditation. If a person does not think Whom he is addressing, and what he is asking for, and who it is that is asking, and of Whom he is asking it, I do not consider that he is praying at all even though he be constantly moving his lips."

Although Saint Teresa does not disclose in *The Interior Castle* the supernatural origin of her idea of comparing the soul to a castle, she did reveal it in the course of a conversation with a friend and confessor, Fray Diego de Yepes, in a chance encounter on one of her journeys. His account is as follows: "This holy Mother had been desirous of obtaining some insight into the beauty of a soul in grace. Just at that time she was commanded to write a treatise on prayer, about which she knew a great deal from experience.... God showed her in a vision a most beautiful crystal globe, made in the shape of a castle, and containing seven mansions, in the seventh and innermost of which was the King of Glory in the greatest splendor, illuminating and beautifying them all."

It is true that in the *Way of Perfection,* written some years earlier, Teresa uses a similar illustration: "And now let us imagine that we have within us a palace of priceless worth...." But it is interesting to note the differences between her imagined castle and the castle seen in the vision. Her castle was "built entirely of gold and precious stones," and she adds, "Imagine that within the palace dwells the great King who has vouchsafed to become your Father and who is seated upon a throne of supreme price—namely, your heart." Many who have read the *Way of Perfection* think that the illustrations are identical and that they proceed solely from Teresa's vivid imagination. That is not the case, and there is no reason for doubting the genuineness of this vision of the great Spanish mystic.

In the *Way of Perfection,* after explaining her reason for using such an illustration ("women are not learned or fine-witted") she speaks of the same truth in very simple language. "Do not let us suppose that the interior of the soul is empty; God grant that only women may be so thoughtless as to suppose that." "I think that if I had understood then as I do now how this great King really dwells within this little palace of my soul, I should not have left Him alone so often."

But are these illustrations and this teaching of Saint Teresa in full agreement with modern Catholic teaching? They are certainly in perfect conformity with the teaching of the great Pontiff, Leo XIII, who towards the end of his pontificate gave us the short but precious encyclical letter on the Holy Spirit, *Divinum illud:*

"The manner and extent of the action of the Holy Spirit in individual souls is no less wonderful, although somewhat more difficult to understand, inasmuch as it is entirely invisible." "In the sacrament (of Baptism) when the unclean spirit has been expelled from the soul, *the Holy Spirit enters in* and makes it like to Himself" (italics added).

Since the Council of Trent, Catholic teaching on many points has been somewhat off balance, as modern theologians have been reminding us for some time. Emphasizing the infusion of sanctifying grace and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, rather than the coming of the Holy Spirit—the uncreated Gift—personally, is one example of this lack of full biblical and apostolic teaching. There are countless souls who on being taught the true doctrine of God's indwelling in the soul would echo Saint Teresa's lament, "If I had only known!"

But as Leo XIII reminds us, the Holy Spirit is no more present and contracts no more intimate union with the soul than do the Father and the Son. It is the triune God of whom Saint Teresa speaks and it is only by appropriation that we speak of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The Doctors of the Church say that God is present in all things by his power, presence, and essence, and Saint John of the Cross adds that this includes even the greatest sinner. And to quote again from *Divinum illud:* "Moreover, God by grace resides in the just soul as in a temple in a most intimate and peculiar manner.

...Now this wonderful union, which is properly called 'indwelling,' differing only in degree or state from that with which God beatifies the saints in heaven... is attributed in a peculiar manner to the Holy Spirit.... The fulness of divine gifts is in many ways a consequence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the souls of the just."

Perhaps it is because many religious are not even aware of the existence of this encyclical letter, which was by no means addressed to the limited circle for whom Saint Teresa wrote, that the doctrine of the divine indwelling is almost unknown or ignored by them. The exhortation of the great Pontiff remains unheeded even today: "Wherefore all preachers and those having the care of souls should remember that it is their duty to instruct their people more diligently and more fully about the Holy Spirit." If the decrees of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council are heeded there is hope that seminarians will have a more thorough training in these neglected aspects of our faith and a greater desire to preach them with apostolic zeal.

Anyone who has read the life and letters of Saint Teresa knows that she was an extremely busy person who suffered from trials and sufferings of every kind. She by no means lived in a vacuum, so when she tells us to be mindful of the divine guest who dwells in our souls she knows full well what difficulties we have to overcome in order to keep His Majesty company.

In one of his less well-known works, *Monastic Peace*, Thomas Merton tells us: "To be a monk means really to know Christ living in us, to know the Father, in the Son, through the Holy Spirit. ...The true contemplative life is then simply a deep penetration and understanding of the ordinary Christian life, which for all that we call it 'ordinary' is the most wonderful of all miracles: God himself living in us!"

He continues: "Now when God gives himself initially, he gives himself totally, and in that sense he does not become more 'present' later on. But our growth in grace is a growth in our own supernatural participation in his presence and life within us.... Grace and charity are two aspects of the same reality: God living in us.... This mystery of grace is the bright cloud with which

God overshadows his tabernacle, which is the intimate center of our own being."

Saint Teresa is not out-dated yet, and it may be hoped that more and more persons will desire to know more thoroughly both Saint Teresa and her masterpiece, *The Interior Castle.* Castles in Spain? By all means—so long as they are Saint Teresa's kind!

FOR MY DAUGHTER EMILY

What is all this juice and all this joy?
—GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

It was only
one white tulip

she wanted
to see blowing

in the soft wind:
spring's first candle

speckled for her
and balanced

by God's finger.

DAVID PEARSON ETTER

Book Reviews

THE RISE OF PROTESTANT MONASTICISM. By Francois Biot, O.P. Translated by W. J. Kerrigan. Helicon Press Inc., Dublin, 1963. Pp. 161. Cloth, $3.95.

The Rise of Protestant Monasticism is doubly relevant today. It fulfills its objective of making known to Catholics the importance and value of the Protestant religious-community movement through a scholarly survey of its history and revival. Each part (Position of the Reformers on Religious and Monastic Life, Trial Communities and Monastic Renaissance, Theological Justifications) captures the reader's attention. This book is not only a wonderful contribution to the furthering of an education in and for the ecumenical dialog, but it can also lead to a deeper understanding and appreciation of Christian commitment—for lay people as well as for religious. In a period when many, including religious, are seriously questioning religious life, this book provokes serious thoughts and questions. The author refrains from making judgments. That is left to the reader. His many direct quotations from reformers and contemporary theologians add to the book's value.

Luther tells us how the vows are contrary to the Word of God, to faith, to Christian liberty, to the commandments (pp. 16-21). He condemns religious life because it puts the Order and Rule as center and even source of holiness, whereas God alone is holy and the source of holiness. Christ is the sole means to the Father, so true religious life must be Christocentric.

The amazing thing about these Reformers is that their criticism is precisely that of the "new generation." If the Reformers rejected monasticism because it caused a schism in Christianity, separating an élite from the ordinary, the modern revival takes great pains to avoid this schism and to demonstrate that schism is not intrinsic to monasticism. It is intriguing to see the development of a "theology of celibacy" among Protestants. A Max Thurian will conclude to the total, absolute, definitive character of celibacy. For him it forms an integral part of society as a living protest against secularization. "...It must always be in the *second person*, an important and necessary element in the dialog of men, always called in question and asking questions" (p. 123).

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CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN WRITERS. By Joseph R. Foster. Hawthorn Books, New York, 1963. Pp. 160. Cloth, $3.50. (Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism, v. 117.)

This volume of but 160 pages is indeed an ambitious one. In his own characteristic, smooth-flowing English, revealing a broad and comprehensive literary background, John R. Foster surveys writers of "imaginative literature that interprets

life in Christian terms" (p.9), from 1900 to the present day. He makes no attempt to deal with writers who belong principally to the philosophical or theological realm. Some seventy authors arbitrarily chosen from about eleven different countries of the world are treated in a manner admittedly "swift and superficial" (p. 154). There is no uniform plan for handling them. Biographical data is offered on some, while most are analyzed only in view of their influence on the Christian world in terms of the content and style of their writings—their characters, settings and plots. The expositions (and concentration is on exposition rather than on criticism) vary greatly in length — from about nine pages for Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene and George Bernanos, less than onehalf page for Antonia White, Christopher Dawson, Mary Gilbert, to just a few lines for Johannes Jorgensen and Joaquim Paco d'Arcos and no more than a sentence for several of the Polish writers.

Many of the writers are not Catholics (C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, Willa Cather, Rudolph A. Schroder, Albrecht Goes, Manfred Haussmann, etc.). Mention is even made (p. 154) of the Greek Nikos Kazantzphen who was clearly not even a Christian! And one cannot help but wonder about the choice and positive influence of Ina Seidel, about whom Foster comments: "... Christianity is not the heart and soul of her work" (p. 119); or Miguel de Unanmuno, who "was certainly not an orthodox Christian, but rather a skeptic seeking a faith" (p. 133); or Mary McCarthy, whose tone is definitely negative (p. 68 ff).

Although this reviewer questions the deep and lasting quality of this book, she readily admits its stimulating and generally informative aspects.

Sister Ann Rita, G.N.S.H.
The Grey Nuns Motherhouse
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

THE IMPACT OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS. By Anthony N. Gilkes. Macmillan & Co., London; St. Martin's Press, New York, 1962. Pp. viii, 167. Cloth, $3.50.

The non-specialist is understandably bewildered by the flood of books on the Qumran discoveries. Former headmaster of an English public school, Gilkes is a classical scholar who makes no claim to be an authority on the scrolls or to have done original research. But he has read widely on the subject, visited the sites, consulted with experts, and obviously enjoys communicating his enthusiasm. The fact that Père de Vaux checked the factual content of several chapters is a sufficient guarantee of the book's general reliability. The reviewer found only a few questionable statements. In six chapters, the author relates the facts of the discovery of the scrolls, briefly describes the principal nonbiblical documents, giving substantial extracts in Gaster's translation, reviews the controversy over the dating, examines the problem of the Essenes and the teacher of righteousness, discusses the more sensational interpretations, and surveys the principal points of comparison with the New Testament. While his criticism of extreme opinions is fair and courteous, his judgment is quite balanced. There are twelve good

pictures, a map, a plan, an index, and a brief bibliography, not very helpful because it mixes items of very different genus and quality quite indiscriminately. This book would seem ideal for the teaching Sister who wants to learn the chief facts about the scrolls but has time to read just one little book.

Claude Peifer, O.S.B.
St. Bede Abbey
Peru, Illinois

THE CHURCH AND THE SACRAMENTS. By Karl Rahner. Translated by W. J. O'Hara. (Quaestiones Disputatae No. 9.) Herder and Herder, New York, 1963. Pp. 117. Paper, $2.25.

Describing Christ as the "primal sacrament" and the Church as the "fundamental sacrament", this theological frontier-book parallels rather closely Father Schillebeeckx's *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God*— or vice versa, since Father Rahner's book appeared first. It is almost as if the two star theologians were conducting a dogmatic drag race. Though progressive and sometimes original, this Jesuit author is by no means radical, but rather he puts new life into old traditions. In his definition of the Church lies the key to his development of sacramental doctrine: "The sign of the grace of God definitively triumphant in the world in Christ .... the socially organized form (of) the people of God as in fact redeemed by Christ" (pp. 18-19). Some topics of his theological clarifications are: "opus operatum" (pp. 24 ff.); the flexibility of the number seven as denoting the totality of the sacraments (pp. 41 ff.); the relationship between baptism and confirmation (the latter bestowing a "world-transforming mission," p. 92); etc. Like the treasure hidden in the field, this book demands painstaking investigation, especially in view of the Rahner ponderousness which filters through the translation in places—e.g., the first sentence beginning at the top of page 19, and the last sentence on page 74. A better integrated, invigorating insight into the relationship between Church and sacraments awaits the patient reader.

Martin Hopkins, O.P.
Saint Peter Martyr Priory
Winona, Minnesota

OUR CHILDREN AND OURSELVES. By Etienne De Greeff. Translated by the Earl of Wicklow. Alba House, Staten Island, New York, 1964. Pp. 151. Cloth, $3.95.

In this short volume, Doctor De Greeff "unravels some of the mysteries and reveals the beauty of human personality through childhood and adolescence." This is the opinion of Father E. F. O'Doherty, well-known psychologist of the University of Dublin, who has written the introduction to this book. Father also calls Doctor De Greeff's style "pungent and trenchant," though admitting that it is "often difficult."

There is no doubt that this book contains much that is of interest and use to parents and hence to teachers, who act "in loco parentis" for so many hours of the day. Though one might not always agree with the author, especially in the area of religious education and formation, one must admit that much

can be gleaned of the child's personality and behavior.

The book begins with a chapter entitled "A Call to Life." The author points out that the attitude of the parents, even in the earliest stages of the child's development, has a great deal to do with the personality of the child. This chapter provides some positive guidance for parents.

The chapter called "The School and the First Meeting with God" contains many points which could be debated. It is difficult to understand why Doctor De Greeff feels that the child meets God in the school and not in the home, in the parents, and in the family love. He also refers to the "little Jesus." There is no mention of the risen Lord, our Christ and Brother.

The section on the adolescent is rich with insights and understanding of this difficult age. Anyone dealing with teen-agers will find Doctor De Greeff's observations interesting and thought provoking. These last three chapters, like much of the book, will lead the reader to thoughtful discussions with others who are interested in their children and themselves.

Sister Eugene Marie, O.S.B.
Catholic University
Washington, D.C.

IN THE MARGINS OF THE GOSPEL. By Etienne Robo. Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland, 1963. Pp. 192. Cloth, $3.95.

The nine essays collected in this small book seek to reconstruct the background for various Gospel incidents for which the sacred writers offer no information. Among others, Father Robo considers Thomas's absence from the group on Easter Sunday evening, Judas's motivation for staying with Jesus after he had lost faith in him as the Christ, and the source of Mary Magdalene's costly ointment.

Father Robo's approach is imaginative rather than critical, contrary to the prevalent trend of Scripture studies today. In explaining this approach, the author notes in his introduction that "None of the stories are pure inventions.... They are possible, I might even say probable." But anticipating a measure of disagreement with his conclusions, he observes, "I still believe, however, that I had something to say and that, well or badly, I have said it." Readers of this collection of Gospel essays will probably form their own judgment in its early pages.

Sister Mary Dennis, O.S.B.
Mount Saint Scholastica
Atchison, Kansas

GUIDE TO THE CATHOLIC SISTERHOODS IN THE UNITED STATES. Compiled by Thomas P. McCarthy, C.S.V. Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1964. Revised and Enlarged. Pp. 404. Cloth, $4.50. Paper, $2.95.

Those who engage in any kind of vocational guidance will welcome the revised and enlarged edition of this volume.

It is true that most young ladies seem inclined toward particular communities with which they have come into personal contact through school or other activities. Nevertheless, an occasional girl seeks assistance about a religious order not located in the

area or about societies laboring in unusual fields. The *Guide to the Catholic Sisterhoods* quickly and easily enables one called upon for advice to supply names and addresses and other pertinent information.

This edition contains a new and detailed table of contents as well as the extensive index with its many cross-references found in older printings. Every vocational counsellor should own a copy of this very useful tool.

Rev. Joseph M. Champlin
Immaculate Conception Cathedral
Syracuse, New York

HELPS TO HAPPINESS. By John Carr, C.SS.R. Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland, 1964. Pp. 221. Cloth, $3.75.

Writing seventy-five two-to-three minute readings on a wide variety of subjects is a task not many authors of spiritual books would attempt. Father John Carr, C.SS.R., states that his book is intended for just anybody, "Catholic, non-Catholic, Mahometan, nothing — or worse than nothing, Communist," at just any time, "while waiting for your friend to return who said he'd be back in a second," or "while waiting for that dreadful moment when your identity is suddenly disclosed to a roomful of staring strangers by the doctor's or dentist's receptionist." The table of contents lists the readings alphabetically, as they appear in the book, from "A Penny For Your Thoughts," through "How is Business?" "Mind Your Own Business," and "Second Childhood," to "Worldliness" and "You Have Bad Thoughts, Have You?" This sampling of titles reveals the type of commonplace topics treated.

The overall design of this pocket-size book is, according to the jacket, to show that "happiness depends on our relationships with God and our neighbor, what we make of this, and how generous we are in letting God make what we are better, and richer, more full." There is wisdom and some wit in what Father Carr writes, and his little volume is friendly in tone, thought-provoking in content. It is, however, so genuinely Catholic throughout that one might wonder whether Christians of a different persuasion — or Mahometans or Communists — would find it objective enough to linger over. Its appeal will certainly be to the average Catholic lay reader who may be helped by the thoughtful perusal of these capsule readings.

Mother Louise Callan, R.S.C.J.
Maryville College
Saint Louis, Missouri

SAINT IN THE WILDERNESS. By Glenn D. Kittler. Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York. Pp. 216. Cloth, $3.95.

Jean de Brébeuf, Anthony Daniel, Gabriel Lalement, Charles Garnier, Noël Chabanel, René Goupil, Jean de LaLande, Isaac Jogues — the list reads like a litany of the saints, and so it is. In *Saint In the Wilderness*, the names take on flesh as we watch these Jesuits and companion laymen unflinchingly live out their conviction that an apostle is "one to whom Christ has committed other men." In their case, it was the American Indians — Mohawks, Hurons, Algonquins — who, buried in superstition

with its consequent prejudice, were nonetheless embraced in true Christian love, and then given the ultimate proof of this love as these seventeenth-century European apostles poured out their life-blood in America's North Woods arena.

Glenn Kittler, in his refreshingly simple way, brings out the day by day heroism of these men. Like the valiant mother of early Christendom who, after her little son had looked on the mangled body of his martyred father, gave him a small blood-soaked cloth to wear always over his heart so that he would never forget what it means to be a Christian, the author makes the pages literally cry out: See, this is what it means to be an apostle of Christ!

Middle and upper-grade students will love the book as part of a collateral reading assignment in American history. Sisters will undoubtedly enjoy it, if they can take the blood and fire — but not for table reading!

Sister Jean Marie, S.S.N.D.
Notre Dame of the Lake
Mequon, Wisconsin

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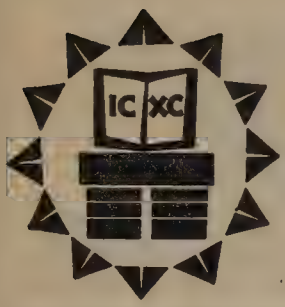

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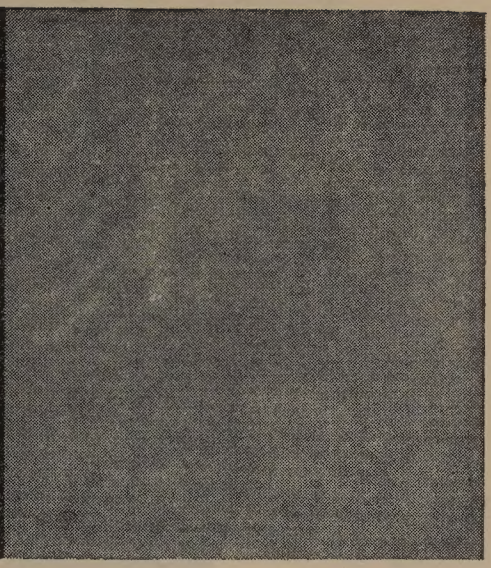

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